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Onions

Colorado produces an average of 500 million pounds of onions annually, ranking the state 5th in the nation for onion production.

Good quality onions should be firm and hard with short, tight necks and dry papery skins. Slightly loose outer skin is common and should not affect quality. Avoid onions that show mold, decay or blemishes.



Look for Colorado onions at your local grocery store or at restaurants across the state.

Each month the Colorado Department of Agriculture will feature a different commodity to highlight the variety and quality of products grown in the state. Visit www.ag.state.co.us/mkt/mkt.html for a complete list of recipes.

Colorado Onion Soup

Colorado Chef James Mace, Horn Creek Conference Center, Westcliffe

3 tbsp. Vegetable oil

4 Large onions, thinly sliced (8 cups)

3 oz. Worcestershire sauce

1 1/2 tsp. Sugar 1/4 tsp. Salt 1/8 tsp. Pepper

5 cups Beef broth plus 1 cup water

1/4 cup Red wine vinegar

6 to 8 Toasted baguette slices, 1 inch thick 1 1/2 cups Mozzarella or Gruyere cheese, shredded

Heat oil in nonreactive Dutch oven over mediumhigh heat until hot. Add onions; stir to coat. Saute 5 to 7 minutes until onions begin to soften, turning occasionally. Reduce heat to low; sprinkle with sugar; cover and cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Uncover; increase heat to medium. Continue cooking 20 to 30 minutes or until onions turn a rich brown. (As onions begin to brown, add an ounce of red wine vinegar, scrape bottom of pan with a wooden spoon to incorporate caramel color into onions and to prevent scorching.) Stir in broth, red wine vinegar and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low simmer, partially covered, for 30 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat broiler; ladle hot soup into oven-proof bowls. Top with 1 or 2 slices of bread; sprinkle with cheese. Place bowls on baking sheet, broil until cheese is melted.

Enjoy with a Colorado wine, such as a glass of Syrah from DeBeque Canyon Winery, located in Palisade, Colorado.

Next Month... Potato Lover's Month